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Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 1-16 (cancelled).

Claim 17 (previously presented): A media gateway in a packet network, said media gateway providing communication between a first station and said packet network and a second media gateway providing communication between a second station and said packet network, said media gateway adapted to:

allocate resources for said first station, said resources forming a first connection providing communication from said media gateway over said packet network to said second media gateway, said first connection adapted to provide a first service level;

transmit a request for communication with said second station, said request providing network connection information about said first connection and said first service level;

receive a message providing network connection information about a second connection and a second service level, said second service level associated with said second connection, said second connection providing communication between said second media gateway and said packet network;

modify said first connection to provide said second service level;

transmit data received from said first station destined for said second station to a network address of said second media gateway using said first connection; and

transmit data received from said second station destined for said first station to a network address of said first media gateway using said second connection.

Claim 18 (original): The media gateway of claim 17 further adapted to:

prior to said allocating, receiving a service request from said first station, said service request

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requesting said first level of service; and

wherein said allocating is responsive to said service request received.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The media gateway of claim 17 wherein said service request further comprises a request for a settlement procedure for said modification of said first connection; and further comprising transmitting a settlement message requesting that costs of associating said first connection with said second service level be allocated according to said settlement procedure.

Claim 20 (original): The media gateway of claim 17 wherein said media gateway and said second media gateway are serviced by a single media gateway controller.

Claim 21 (original): The media gateway of claim 17 further adapted to:
receive a modification request triggered by one of said first station, said second media gateway, a media gateway controller, said second station and a third party; and
modify said first connection responsive to said modification request.

Claim 22 (original): The media gateway of claim 17 further adapted to:
receive a modification request from a media gateway controller; and
modify said first connection responsive to said modification request.

Claim 23 (original): A media gateway controller in a data network, said media gateway controller for establishing communication between a first media gateway and a second media gateway over a packet network, said first media gateway servicing a first station and said second media gateway servicing a second station, said media gateway controller adapted to:

receive a request from said first media gateway, said request requesting a level of service for a

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connection for communication between said first media gateway and said second media gateway, an address for a second station and a first network address associated with said connection terminating at said first media gateway, said first station subscribing to a subscription level of service different from said level of service requested;

transmit a communication request to said second media gateway, said communication request requesting said second media gateway allocate resources for communication between said second media gateway and said first media gateway over said packet network for said connection;

receive from said second media gateway a network address associated with said connection terminating at said second media gateway;

transmit to said first media gateway a response to said request, said response indicating a level of service to be provided to said first station in view of said service level requested; and

said connection comprising an upstream connection for transmissions from said first media gateway to said second media gateway and a downstream connection for transmissions from said second media gateway to said first media gateway.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The media gateway controller of claim 23 wherein said media gateway controller communicates with said second media gateway via a second media gateway controller.

Claim 25 (original): The media gateway controller of claim 23 wherein said service level provided for said upstream connection is different from said service level provided for said downstream connection.

Claim 26 (original): The media gateway controller of claim 23 further adapted to:

receive a request to modify said connection, said request indicating modification of at least one of:
said level of service of said upstream connection; said level of service of said downstream

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connection; and allocation of costs of said connection.

Claim 27 (original): The media gateway controller of claim 23 wherein said first media gateway and said second media gateway are serviced by said media gateway controller.

Claim 28 (original): The media gateway controller of claim 23 wherein said level of service to be provided is different from: said requested level of service; and said subscription level of service.

Claim 29 (original): The media gateway controller of claim 23 further adapted to:

transmit to said first media gateway a message requesting modification of said level of service of said connection to be provided to said first station, said modification modifying said level of service to be provided to said requested level of service.

Claim 30 (original): A computer readable media containing software for a media gateway in a packet network, said media gateway communicating with a first station and said packet network and a second media gateway communicating with a second station and said packet network, said computer readable media adapting said media gateway to:

allocate resources to said first station, said resources forming a first communication connection providing communication between said media gateway and said packet network, said first communication connection adapted to provide a first service level;

transmit a request for communication with said second station, said request providing network connection information about said first communication connection and said first service level;

receive a message providing network connection information about a second communication connection and a second service level, said second service level associated with said second communication connection, said second communication connection providing communication between said second media gateway and said packet network;

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receive confirmation of modification of said first connection, said modification adapting said first connection to provide said second service level;

transmit data received from said first station and destined for said second station using said first communication connection; and

transmit data received from said second station and destined for said first station using said second communication connection.

Claim 31 (currently amended): A method of allocating costs associated with providing communication between a user of a packet network and said packet network, said method comprising:

receiving from a station a request for a modification to a service level associated with a connection providing communication between said user and said packet network;

receiving a modified settlement procedure which differs from a settlement procedure subscribed to by said station;

determining whether said modified settlement procedure can be accommodated;

if said modified settlement procedure can be accommodated, modifying said service level associated with said connection to a new service level; and

allocating costs associated with said ~~modifying~~ new service level in accordance with said modified settlement procedure.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The method of claim 31 wherein said station is one of said user and another station, and said modified settlement procedure is received from one of said user and said another station.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The method of claim 31 wherein said determining

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comprises:

transmitting said modified settlement procedure to a network element in said packet network, said network element responsible for collecting call detail information; and

receiving from said network element a response that said modified settlement procedure transmitted to said network element is allowable.

Claims 37-39 (cancelled).

Claim 40 (new): A method for providing communications over a packet network between a first station and a second station, said method comprising, at a first media gateway in said packet network:

allocating resources for said first station, said resources forming a first connection providing communication from said first media gateway over said packet network to a second media gateway in said packet network, said first connection adapted to provide a first service level;

transmitting a request for communication with said second station, said request providing network connection information about said first connection and said first service level;

receiving a message providing network connection information about a second connection and a second service level, said second service level associated with said second connection, said second connection providing communication between said second media gateway and said packet network;

modifying said first connection to provide said second service level;

transmitting data received from said first station destined for said second station to a network address of said second media gateway using said first connection; and

transmitting data received from said second station destined for said first station to a network address of said first media gateway using said second connection.

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Claim 41 (new): The method of claim 40 further comprising:

prior to said allocating, receiving a service request from said first station, said service request requesting said first level of service; and

wherein said allocating is responsive to said service request received.

Claim 42 (new): The method of claim 40 wherein said service request further comprises a request for a settlement procedure for said modification of said first connection; and further comprising transmitting a settlement message requesting that costs of associating said first connection with said second service level be allocated according to said settlement procedure.

Claim 43 (new): The method of claim 40 further comprising:

receiving a modification request triggered by one of said first station, said second media gateway, a media gateway controller, said second station and a third party; and

modifying said first connection responsive to said modification request.

Claim 44 (new): The method of claim 40 further comprising:

receiving a modification request from a media gateway controller; and

modifying said first connection responsive to said modification request.

Claim 45 (new): A method for providing communications between a first station and a second station, said method comprising, at a media gateway controller:

receiving a request from a first media gateway servicing said first station, said request requesting a level of service for a connection for communication between said first media gateway and a second media gateway servicing said second station, an address for a second station and a first network address associated with said connection terminating at said first media gateway, said first station

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subscribing to a subscription level of service different from said level of service requested;

transmitting a communication request to said second media gateway, said communication request requesting said second media gateway allocate resources for communication between said second media gateway and said first media gateway over said packet network for said connection;

receiving from said second media gateway a network address associated with said connection terminating at said second media gateway;

transmitting to said first media gateway a response to said request, said response indicating a level of service to be provided to said first station in view of said service level requested; and

said connection comprising an upstream connection for transmissions from said first media gateway to said second media gateway and a downstream connection for transmissions from said second media gateway to said first media gateway.

Claim 46 (new): The method of claim 45 wherein said transmitting a communication request to said second media gateway is performed via a second media gateway controller.

Claim 47 (new): The method of claim 45 wherein said service level provided for said upstream connection is different from said service level provided for said downstream connection.

Claim 48 (new): The method of claim 45 further comprising:

receiving a request to modify said connection, said request indicating modification of at least one of: said level of service of said upstream connection; said level of service of said downstream connection; and allocation of costs of said connection.

Claim 49 (new): The method of claim 45 wherein said first media gateway and said second media gateway are serviced by said media gateway controller.

Claim 50 (new): The method of claim 45 wherein said level of service to be provided is

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different from: said requested level of service; and said subscription level of service.

Claim 51 (new): The method of claim 45 further comprising:

transmitting to said first media gateway a message requesting modification of said level of service of said connection to be provided to said first station, said modification modifying said level of service to be provided to said requested level of service.